

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A storage device for compactly storing elongate tools, comprising:
  - a) a plurality of receptacles arranged in a support in at least front and rear substantially  
 5 linear rows;
  - b) each receptacle including at least a lower receiving port and an upper receiving  
 aperture in which a tool can be held when disposed through the upper receiving aperture and into  
 the lower receiving port;
  - c) the receptacles of the front row being forwardly splayed at a forward angle with  
 10 respect to vertical greater than the receptacles of the rear row;
  - d) the receptacles within each row being laterally splayed with respect to vertical, with  
 receptacles within each row being oriented at progressively increasing lateral angles with respect  
 to vertical from receptacles at a center of each row to receptacles at lateral ends of each row; and
  - e) attachment means for attaching the support to a structure to secure the support in a  
 15 stable configuration.
2. The storage device of claim 1, wherein the support includes an upper frame and a  
 lower frame, the upper frame being associated with the upper receiving apertures and the lower  
 frame being associated with the lower receiving ports.
- 20 3. The storage device of claim 1, wherein:
  - the support includes a rear contact surface configured to be disposed adjacent the  
 structure; and
  - an indentation in the rear contact surface to provide a space to enable the storage device  
 25 to be attached flush with the structure over an abutment protruding from the structure.
4. The storage device of claim 1, wherein each receptacle further includes a storage tube  
 extending between the upper receiving aperture and the lower receiving port of the receptacle.
- 30 5. The storage device of claim 4, wherein each tube includes a bendable tab formed in  
 each end of the tube, each tab having at least two configurations:

- i) an engaged position, in which the tab is engaged with the support; and
- ii) a disengaged position, in which the tab is disengaged from the support.

5        6. The storage device of claim 4, wherein the support further includes a band extending around the plurality of tubes.

7. The storage device of claim 1, wherein:

- i) the support comprises a tapered enclosure having side walls that taper inwardly in both frontal and lateral directions from a top of the enclosure to a bottom of the enclosure; and
- 10        ii) a plurality of storage tubes disposed in the tapered enclosure, the plurality of storage tubes forming the upper receiving apertures and the lower receiving ports of the receptacles.

8. The storage device of claim 1, wherein:

- i) the receptacles have a height less than about 12 inches;
- 15        ii) at least five receptacles are disposed within a row having a total width less than about 15 inches; and
- iii) at least two of the rows of receptacles are disposed within a space having a depth less than about 7 inches.

20        9. The storage device of claim 8, wherein the support is attached to an enclosure having a ceiling height of less than about 8 feet.

10. The storage device of claim 1, further comprising:

- i) at least one auxiliary collar extending laterally with respect to the support and being
- 25        configured to receive and store an auxiliary item therein; and
- ii) at least one divider removably insertable into the auxiliary collar, to provide support to an auxiliary item disposed in the collar.

30        11. The storage device of claim 10, further comprising a receiving slot associated with the support and being sized and shaped to receive and store the divider when the divider is not inserted into the auxiliary collar.

12. The storage device of claim 1, wherein the receptacles of the rear row are each forwardly splayed at a forward angle with respect to vertical.

5           13. The storage device of claim 1, further comprising a reinforcing plate disposed beneath the receptacles to provide support to elongate tools disposed in the receptacles of the front row.

10           14. The storage device of claim 1, further comprising at least one auxiliary container removably attachable to the support and being configured to receive and store an auxiliary item therein.

15. The storage device of claim 1, wherein the receptacles of the rear row are disposed at a higher elevation than the receptacles of the front row.

16. A storage device for compactly storing elongate tools, comprising:

a) a plurality of receptacles arranged in a support in at least front and rear substantially linear rows;

b) each receptacle including at least a lower receiving port and an upper receiving aperture in which an elongate tool can be held when disposed through the upper receiving aperture and into the lower receiving port;

c) the receptacles of the front row being forwardly splayed at a forward angle with respect to vertical greater than the receptacles of the rear row;

d) the receptacles within each row being laterally splayed with respect to vertical, with receptacles within each row being oriented at progressively increasing lateral angles with respect to vertical from receptacles at a center of each row to receptacles at lateral ends of each row;

e) the lower receiving ports of the rear row having an elevation greater than the lower receiving ports of the front row, to provide elevated storage of elongate tools disposed in the receptacles of the rear row; and

f) attachment means for attaching the support to a structure to secure the support in a stable configuration.

17. The storage device of claim 16, wherein the support includes an upper frame and a lower frame, the upper frame being associated with the upper receiving apertures and the lower frame being associated with the lower receiving ports.

18. The storage device of claim 16, wherein the support includes:

a rear contact surface configured to be disposed adjacent the structure; and

an indentation in the rear contact surface to provide a space to enable the storage device to be attached flush with the structure over an abutment protruding from the structure.

19. The storage device of claim 16, wherein each receptacle further includes a storage tube extending between the upper receiving aperture and the lower receiving port of the receptacle.

20. The storage device of claim 19, wherein each tube includes a bendable tab formed in each end of the tube, each tab having at least two configurations:

- i) an engaged position, in which the tab is engaged with the support; and
- ii) a disengaged position, in which the tab is disengaged from the support.

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21. The storage device of claim 19, wherein the support further includes a band extending around the plurality of tubes.

22. The storage device of claim 16, wherein:

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- i) the support comprises a tapered enclosure having side walls that taper inwardly in both frontal and lateral directions from a top of the enclosure to a bottom of the enclosure; and
- ii) a plurality of storage tubes disposed in the tapered enclosure the plurality of storage tubes forming the upper receiving apertures and the lower receiving ports of the receptacles.

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23. The storage device of claim 16, wherein:

- i) the receptacles have a height less than about 12 inches;
- ii) at least five receptacles are disposed within a row having a total width less than about 15 inches; and
- iii) at least two of the rows of receptacles are disposed within a space with a depth less than about 7 inches.

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24. The storage device of claim 23, wherein the support is attached to an enclosure having a ceiling height of less than about 8 feet.

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25. The storage device of claim 16, further comprising:

- i) at least one auxiliary collar extending laterally with respect to the support and being configured to receive and store an auxiliary item therein; and
- ii) at least one divider removably insertable into the auxiliary collar, to provide support to an auxiliary item disposed in the collar.

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26. The storage device of claim 25, further comprising a receiving slot associated with the support and being sized and shaped to receive and store the divider when the divider is not inserted into the auxiliary collar.

5           27. The storage device of claim 16, wherein the receptacles of the rear row are each forwardly splayed at a forward angle with respect to vertical.

          28. The storage device of claim 16, further comprising a reinforcing plate disposed  
10       beneath the receptacles to provide support to elongate tools disposed in the receptacles of the front row.

          29. The storage device of claim 16, further comprising at least one auxiliary container  
removably attachable to the support and being configured to receive and store an auxiliary item  
therein.

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30. A method of compactly storing elongate tools adjacent a structure, comprising the steps of:

a) attaching a tool storage device to a lower section of the structure, the tool storage device having:

5                   i) a plurality of receptacles arranged in a support in at least front and rear substantially linear rows;

                  ii) each receptacle including at least a lower receiving port and an upper receiving aperture;

                  iii) the receptacles of the front row being forwardly splayed at a forward angle  
10               with respect to vertical greater than the receptacles of the rear row; and

b) inserting a handle of each of a plurality of elongate tools into one of the receptacles such that the plurality of elongate tools are stored in the storage device in a splayed directional orientation.

15               31. The method of claim 30, comprising the further step of attaching the tool storage device flush with the structure over an abutment projecting from the structure.

32. The method of claim 30, wherein:

i) the receptacles have a height less than about 12 inches;

20               ii) at least five receptacles are disposed within a row having a total width less than about 15 inches; and

                  iii) at least two of the rows of receptacles are disposed within a space with a depth less than about 7 inches.

25               33. The method of claim 32, wherein the structure comprises an enclosure with a ceiling height of less than about 8 feet.

34. The method of claim 30, wherein the structure comprises an openable door.

30               35. The method of claim 30, wherein the receptacles of the rear row are disposed at a higher elevation than the receptacles of the front row.

36. The method of claim 35, comprising the further step of attaching a reinforcing plate beneath the receptacles of the front row to provide support to the elongate tools disposed in the receptacles of the front row.

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37. The method of claim 30, wherein the receptacles within each row are laterally splayed with respect to vertical, with receptacles within each row being oriented at progressively increasing lateral angles with respect to vertical from receptacles at a center of the row to receptacles at lateral ends of each row.

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